

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 167604
ORIGIN SS-25

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TO AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY SANA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 167604

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV, US, SO

SUBJECT: SOMALI REQUEST FOR U.S. ARMS

1. MEETING WITH SOMALI AMBASSADOR ADDOU ON JULY 15,
UNDER SECRETARY HABIB CONVEYED THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION
THAT THE U.S. AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO RESPOND FAVORABLY
TO SOMALIA'S REQUEST FOR ARMS. WHILE WE NOT AT THIS STAGE

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 167604

IN A POSITION TO BE SPECIFIC AND WOULD BE STUDYING THE
POSSIBILITIES, WE WISH TO SEND A MESSAGE WITH AMBASSADOR
ADDU ON HIS RETURN TO MOGADISCIO CONCERNING OUR AGREEMENT
IN PRINCIPLE TO HELP IN COOPERATION WITH OTHER FRIENDLY
COUNTRIES TO MEET SOMALIA'S DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS. U.S.
WOULD NOW STUDY THE SOMALI LIST AND DECIDE WHAT ITEMS,
WHAT AMOUNT, AND ON WHAT TERMS THE U.S. MIGHT PROVIDE

AND WILL THEN MAKE A MORE SPECIFIC DECISION. HE ADDED THAT THE U.S. WOULD EXPEDITE ECONOMIC AID TO SOMALIA. HE STRESSED THAT THE U.S. WAS INTERESTED IN ENSURING THAT ITS HELP IS FOR DEFENSIVE WEAPONS.

2. AMBASSADOR ADDOU EXPRESSED HIS DEEP THANKS TO PRESIDENT CARTER AND USG FOR THE AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE. HE FELT PRESIDENT'S DECISION WAS A TANGIBLE STEP TOWARDS THE GOAL OF A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE U.S. AND SOMALIA.

HE WOULD, HOWEVER, HAVE HOPED FOR APPROVAL OF SPECIFIC ITEMS RATHER THAN JUST AN AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE.

HE STRESSED THAT TIMING IS A CRITICAL FACTOR SINCE WITHIN A MONTH SOVIET DELIVERIES COULD PLACE ETHIOPIA IN A POSITION TO THREATEN SOMALIA.

3. IN RESPONSE TO MR. HABIB'S OBSERVATION THAT AT PRESENT FIGHTING IS GOING ON NOT IN SOMALIA BUT IN THE ETHIOPIAN OGADEN, ADDOU SAID THAT THERE ARE IN FACT LIBERATION FIGHTERS IN THE OGADEN AS WELL AS IN ERITREA. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE SOMALI GOVERNMENT IS GIVING SUPPORT TO THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS IN ERITREA AND THE OGADEN SINCE SOMALIA CONSIDERS THEM TO BE LEGITIMATE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS DESERVING OF SUPPORT JUST LIKE OTHER LIBERATION MOVEMENTS IN AFRICA.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 167604

HE STRESSED HOWEVER THAT PRESIDENT SIAD HAS FREQUENTLY REPEATED THAT SOMALIA WILL NEVER BE THE FIRST TO ATTACK. HOWEVER, SOMALIA MUST BE PREPARED IN CASE ETHIOPIA MOVES AGAINST SOMALIA. HE DESCRIBED PRESIDENT SIAD'S POSITION AS DIFFICULT GIVEN FACT THAT SOVIETS CAN SIMPLY WITHHOLD ARMS FROM SOMALIA WHILE CONTINUING THEIR SUPPLIES TO ETHIOPIA. HENCE THE URGENCY OF THE NEED FOR ALTERNATIVE SUPPLIES FOR SOMALIA.

4. IN SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSION WITH ADDOU, AF/E DIRECTOR OBSERVED THAT SOMALIA NOW KNEW CLEAR INTENTION OF PRESIDENT TOWARD SOMALIA, THAT REALIZATION OF THAT INTENTION WAS TASK NOW BEFORE US. HE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE OGADEN WOULD NOT RESULT IN A SITUATION WHICH WOULD COMPLICATE THAT TASK IN TERMS OF PUBLIC AND CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES. ADDOU TOOK THE POINT BUT ADDED THAT IT IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN MOMENTUM OF IMPROVING RELATIONS. IT WAS MUTUALLY AGREED THAT BOTH GOVERNMENTS SHOULD KEEP PRESIDENT'S DECISION CONFIDENTIAL UNTIL MORE CONCRETE STEPS WERE POSSIBLE.

5. FOR INFO ADDRESSEES: SEPTTEL FOLLOWS PROVIDING INSTRUC-

TIONS FOR INFORMING YOUR HOST GOVERNMENTS. VANCE

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